

Message Text

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ACTION DLOS-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-14 ISO-00 CG-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 CEQ-02 COA-02

COME-00 EB-11 EPA-04 NSF-04 SCI-06 FEA-02 ACDA-19

AEC-11 AGR-20 DOTE-00 FMC-04 INT-08 JUSE-00 CEA-02

CIEP-03 FPC-01 OMB-01 SAM-01 STR-08 TRSE-00 FRB-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3834

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLOS

SUBJECT: BRITISH ORDER DESIGNATING ADDITIONAL CONTINENTAL
SHELF AREA

REF: DUBLIN 1232

1. THE UK ORDER-IN-COUNCIL OF SEPT. 6 LAYING CLAIM TO
MINERAL RIGHTS AND NATURAL RESOURCES IN "... AN
ADDITIONAL AREA OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF. ..." AS
EXCLUSIVELY FOR BRITISH EXPLOITATION AROUND THE ISLAND OF
ROCKALL HAS PRODUCED DIFFERING REPORTS IN UK PRESS.

2. THE GUARDIAN UNDER HEADING "MINERAL BRAG BLOW TO SEA
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LAW HOPES" STATES THIS ORDER EFFECTIVELY MEANS THE UK

GOVERNMENT HOPES TO PERSUADE OTHER NATIONS TO AGREE THAT BRITAIN'S TERRITORIAL LIMITS SHOULD BE MEASURED FROM ROCKALL. THE REPORT NOTES FURTHER THAT AS LAW OF SEA CONFERENCE HAS ALREADY ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE 200-MILE ECONOMIC ZONE, UK ACTION WOULD RESULT IN A SIGNIFICANT ADDITION FOR BRITAIN. GUARDIAN CONCLUDES THAT BRITISH WILL NO LONGER BE WELL PLACED TO ARGUE FOR COMPROMISE ON LAW OF THE SEA QUESTIONS BY OTHERS THUS DEALING A BLOW TO THE ALREADY SLENDER HOPES TO ACHIEVE AGREEMENT ON A NEW LAW OF SEA.

3. THE FINANCIAL TIMES TAKES ANOTHER VIEW OF THE ORDER IN REPORT HEADED "BRITAIN CLAIMS 52,000 SQ. MILES FOR OIL SEARCH". IT NOTES THAT UNDER THE SEPT. 6 ORDER ANYONE SEEKING AN EXPLORATION LICENSE WILL BEED TO APPLY TO UK DEPT. OF ENERGY, BE A UK CITIZEN AND WILL HAVE TO MAKE FINDINGS KNOWN. THE ORDER INCREASES THE AREA OF THE CONTIN-
ENTAL SHELF DESIGNATED BY THE UK BY ALMOST ONE-THIRD; ONLY 168,000 SQ. MILES HAD BEEN DESIGNATED SO FAR UNDER CONTINENTAL SHELF (DWSIGNATION OF AREAS) ORDER OF 1964. THE CHIEF DIFFERENCE FROM PREVIOUS ORDERS IS THAT NEW AREA MUCH FURTHER OUT TO SEA.

4. FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE TOLD US THAT ORDER-IN-COUNCIL IS INTERPRETIVE ACTION OF GOVERNMENT ISSUED ON BASIS OF EXISTING ACT OF PARLIAMENT WHICH OUTLINES IN GENERAL UK RIGHTS OVER THE SEABED AND CONTINENTAL SHELF. WHILE ROCKALL ISLAND HAPPENS TO BE LOCATED GEOGRAPHICALLY NEAR CENTER OF AREA ESTABLISHED BY SEPTEMBER 6 ORDER, NEW AREA, IN FACT, IS NOT BASED ON MEASUREMENTS FROM ROCKALL BUT IS EXTENSION WESTWARD OF EXISTING AREA ESTABLISHED UNDER SIMILAR ORDER IN 1971 OFF WEST COAST OF SCOTLAND. WILLIAMS SAID ORDER IS CONCERNED WITH CONTINENTAL SHELF AND SEABED AND NOT WITH FISHING. ORDER SPECIFIES LIMITS OF NEW AREA BY GEOGRAPHIC COORDINATES. IT DOES NOT EMPOWER OIL COMPANIES OR OTHERS TO BEGIN OPERATIONS IN NEW AREA; SUBSEQUENT ORDER WILL BE NEEDED BEFORE EXPLORATION OR EXPLOITATION CAN BEGIN.

5. FCO WILL PROVIDE COPY OF ORDER AND INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT WHICH WE WILL POUCH.

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Message Attributes

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